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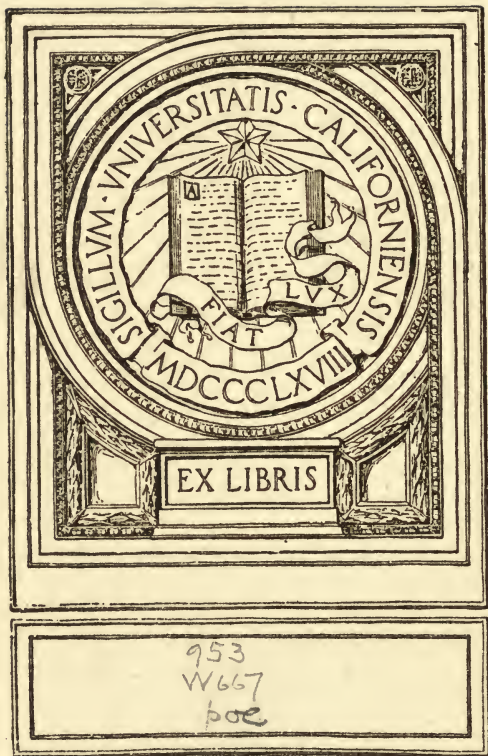


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POEMS of PROBLEMS



Ella Wheeler Wilcox



POEMS OF PROBLEMS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

POEMS OF PASSION
POEMS OF PLEASURE
POEMS OF POWER
POEMS OF CHEER
POEMS OF SENTIMENT
POEMS OF PROGRESS
POEMS OF EXPERIENCE
THE KINGDOM OF LOVE
MAURINE
THREE WOMEN
YESTERDAYS
THE ENGLISHMAN

In the Press

POEMS OF PROBLEMS

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BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



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1914

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ARROW AND BOW



It is easy to stand in the pulpit or in
the closet to kneel

And say—"God do this; God do
that—

"Make the world better; relieve the
sorrows of man; for the sake of
thy son

"Oh forgive all sin." Then having planned out
God's work, to feel

Our duty is done.

It is easy to be religious this way.

Easy to pray.

It is harder to stand on the highway, or walk in
the crowded mart;

And say "I am He; I am He;

"Mine the world burden; mine the sorrows of
men; mine is the Christ work

"To forgive my brother's sin; and then to live
the Christ part

And never to shirk.

It is hard for you and me

To be religious this way.

Day after day.

But God is no longer in heaven; we drove him
out with our prayers;
Drove him out with our sermons and creeds,
and our endless complaints and despairs.
He came down over the borders, and Christ too
came along;
They are looking the whole world over to see just
what is wrong.
God has grown weary of hearing his praises
sung on earth;
And Jesus is weary of hearing the story about
his birth;
And the way to win their favor, that is surer
than any other,
Is to join in a song of Brotherhood and praises
of one another.

No, God is no longer in heaven; He has come
down on earth to see
That nothing is wrong with the world He made;
THE WRONG IS IN YOU AND ME.
He meant the earth for a garden spot, where
mill and factory stand;
Childhood he meant for growing time; but look
at the toiling hand!
Woman was meant for mother and mate; now
look at the slaves of lust.
And the good folks shake their heads and say
“We must pray to God and trust.”

God has a billion books of our prayers unopened
upon his shelves,
For the things we are begging of him to do,
He wants us to do ourselves.

Jehovah, Jesus, and each soul in space
Are one, and undividable: Until
We see God shining in each neighbor's face
And find Him in ourselves and hail Him there,
Let us be still.

What use is prayer,
How can we love the whole, and not each part?
How worship God, and harbor in the heart
Hate of God's members (for all men are that).
Too long our souls have sat,
Like poor blind beggars at the door of God.
He never made a beggar—We are kings!
Let us rise up, for it is time we trod
The mountain-tops; time that we did the things
We have so long asked God to do.

He waits for you
To look deep in your brother's eyes and see
The God within;
To hear you say "Lo, thou art He; Lo, thou
art He."

This is the only way to end all sin.
The difficult, one way.

*A prayer without a deed is an arrow without a
bow-string;*

*A deed without a prayer is a bow-string without
an arrow.*

*The heart of a man should be like a quiver full
of arrows,*

*And the hand of a man should be like a strong
bow strung for action.*

*The heart of a man should keep his arrows ever
ascending,*

*And the hand and the mind of a man should
keep at a work unending.*

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

HUSKS



HE looked at her neighbour's house in
the light of the waning day—
A shower of rice on the steps, and
the shreds of a bride's bouquet.
And then she drew the shade, to shut
out the growing gloom,
But she shut it into her heart instead. (Was that
a voice in the room?)

'My neighbour is sad,' she sighed, 'like the
mother bird who sees
The last of her brood fly out of the nest to make
its home in the trees'—
And then in a passion of tears—'But, oh, to be
sad like her:
Sad for a joy that has come and gone!' (Did
some one speak, or stir?)
She looked at her faded hands, all burdened with
costly rings;

She looked on her widowed home, all burdened
with priceless things.

She thought of the dead years gone, of the empty
years ahead—

(Yes, something stirred and something spake, and
this was what it said:)

*‘The voice of the Might Have Been speaks here
through the lonely dusk;*

*Life offered the fruits of love; you gathered only
the husk.*

*There are jewels ablaze on your breast where
never a child has slept.’*

She covered her face with her ringed old hands,
and wept and wept and wept.

SISTERS OF MINE



SISTERS, sisters of mine, have we done
what we could

In all the old ways, through all the
new days,

To better the race and to make life
sweet and good?

Have we played the full part that was ours in
the start,

Sisters of mine?

Sisters, sisters of mine, as we hurry along
To a larger world, with our banners unfurled,
The battle-cry on lips where once was Love's old
song,

Are we leaving behind better things than we find,
Sisters of mine?

Sisters, sisters of mine, through the march in the
street,

Through turmoil and din, without and within,
As we gain something big do we lose something
sweet?

In the growth of our might is our grace lost to
sight?

As new powers unfold do we *love* as of old,
Sisters of mine?

ANSWER



WELL have we done the old tasks!
in the old, old ways of earth.
We have kept the house in order, we
have given the children birth;
And our sons went out with their
fathers, and left us alone at the
hearth:

We have cooked the meats for their table; we
have woven their cloth at the loom;
We have pulled the weeds from their gardens,
and kept the flowers in bloom;
And then we have sat and waited, alone in a
silent room.

We have borne all the pains of travail in giving
life to the race;
We have toiled and saved, for the masters, and
helped them to power and place;

And when we asked for a pittance, they gave it
with grudging grace.

On the bold, bright face of the dollar all the evils
of earth are shown.

We are weary of love that is barter, and of virtue
that pines alone;

We are out in the world with the masters: we are
finding and claiming our own!

THE SILENT TRAGEDY



HE deepest tragedies of life are not
Put into books, or acted on the stage.
Nay, they are lived in silence, by tense
hearth.

In homes, among dull, unperceiving
kin,

And thoughtless friends, who make a whip of
words

Wherewith to lash these hearts, and call it wit.

There is a tragedy lived everywhere

In Christian lands, by an increasing horde

Of women martyrs to our social laws.

Women whose hearts cry out for motherhood ;

Women whose bosoms ache for little heads ;

Women God meant for mothers, but whose lives

Have been restrained, restricted, and denied

Their natural channels, till at last they stand

Unmated and alone, by that sad sea

Whose slow receding tide returns no more.

Men meet great sorrows ; but no man can grasp
The depth, and height, of such a grief as this.

The call of Fatherhood is from man's brain.
Man cannot know the answer to that call
Save as a woman tells him. But to her
The call of Motherhood is from the soul,
The brain, the body. She is like a plant
Which buds and blossoms only to bear fruit.
Man is the pollen, carried by the wind
Of accident, or impulse, or desire ;
And then his rôle of fatherhood is played.
Her threefold knowledge of maternity,
Through three times three great months, is hers
alone.

Man as an egotist is wounded when
He is not father. Woman when denied
The all-embracing rôle of motherhood
Rebels with her whole being. Oftentimes
Rebellion finds its only utterance
In shattered nerves, and lack of self-control ;
Which gives the merry world its chance to cry
' Old maids are queer.'

In far off Eastern lands

They think of God as Mother to the race;
Father and Mother of the Universe.
And mayhap this is why they make their girls
Wives prematurely, mothers over young;
Hoping to please their Mother God this way.
Since everywhere in Nature sex is shown
For procreative uses, they contend
Sterility is sinful. (Save when one
Chooses a life of Saintship here on earth,
And so conserves all forces to that end.)

Here in the West, our God is Masculine;
And while we say He bade a Virgin bring
His Son to birth, we think of Him as One
Placing false values on forced continence—
Preparing heavens for those who live that life—
And hells for those who stray by thought or act
From the unnatural path our laws have made.

Mother of Christ, thou being woman, thou
Knowing all depths within the woman heart,
All joy, all pain, oh send the world more light.
Enlarge our sympathies; and let our minds
Turn from achievements of material things
To contemplation of Eternal truths.

Space throbs with egos, waiting for rebirth;
And mother-hearted women fill the earth.
Mother of Christ, show us the way to thin
The ranks of childless women, without sin.

THE TRINITY



MUCH may be done with the world we
are in,
Much with the race to better it;
We can unfetter it,
Free it from chains of the old
traditions;
Broaden its viewpoint of virtue and sin;
Change its conditions
Of labour and wealth;
And open new roadways to knowledge and health.
Yet some things ever must stay as they are
While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.
A man and a woman with love between,
Loyal and tender and true and clean,
Nothing better has been or can be
Than just those three.

Woman may alter the first great plan.
Daughters and sisters and mothers,
May stalk with their brothers
Forth from their homes into noisy places
Fit (and fit only) for masculine man.

Marring their graces
With conflict and strife
To widen the outlook of all human life.
Yet some things ever must stay as they are
While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.
A man and a woman with love that strengthens
And gathers new force as its earth way lengthens;
Nothing better by God is given
This side of heaven.

Science may show us a wonderful vast
Secret of life and of breeding it;
Man by the heeding it
Out of earth's chaos may bring a new order.
Off with old systems, old laws may be cast.
What now seems the border
Of license in creeds,
May then be the centre of thoughts and of deeds.
Yet some things ever must stay as they are
While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.
A man and a woman and love undefiled
And the look of the two in the face of a child,—
Oh, the joys of this world have their changing
ways,
But this joy stays.
Nothing better on earth can be
Than just those three.

THE WELL-BORN



SO many people—people—in the world;
So few great souls, love ordered, well
begun,
In answer to the fertile mother need!
So few who seem
The image of the Maker's mortal dream;
So many born of mere propinquity—
Of lustful habit, or of accident.
Their mothers felt
No mighty, all-compelling wish to see
Their bosoms garden-places
Abloom with flower faces;
No tidal wave swept o'er them with its flood;
No thrill of flesh or heart; no leap of blood;
No glowing fire, flaming to white desire
For mating and for motherhood:
Yet they bore children.
God! how mankind misuses thy command,
To populate the earth!
How low is brought high birth!

How low the woman ; when, inert as spawn
Left on the sands to fertilise,
She is the means through which the race goes on.
Not so the first intent.

Birth, as the Supreme Mind conceived it, meant
The clear, imperious call of mate to mate
And the clear answer. Only thus and then
Are fine, well-ordered, and potential lives
Brought into being. Not by Church or State
Can birth be made legitimate,
Unless

Love in its fulness bless.

Creation so ordains its lofty laws
That man, while greater in all other things,
Is lesser in the generative cause.

The father may be merely man, the male ;
Yet more than female must the mother be.

The woman who would fashion
Souls, for the use of earth and angels meet,
Must entertain a high and holy passion.

Not rank, or wealth, or influence of kings
Can give a soul its dower

Of majesty and power,
Unless the mother brings

Great love to that great hour.

THE PRICE HE PAID



SAID I would have my fling,
And do what a young man may :
And I didn't believe a thing
That the parsons have to say.
I didn't believe in a God

That gives us blood like fire,
Then flings us into hell because
We answer the call of desire.

And I said: 'Religion is rot,
And the laws of the world are nil;
For the bad man is he who is caught
And cannot foot his bill.
And there is no place called hell;
And heaven is only a truth
When a man has his way with a maid,
In the fresh keen hour of youth.

And money can buy us grace,
If it rings on the plate of the church:
And money can neatly erase
Each sign of a sinful smirch.'

For I saw men everywhere,
Hotfooting the road of vice;
And women and preachers smiled on them
As long as they paid the price.

So I had my joy of life:
I went the pace of the town;
And then I took me a wife,
And started to settle down.
I had gold enough and to spare
For all of the simple joys
That belong with a house and a home
And a brood of girls and boys.

I married a girl with health
And virtue and spotless fame.
I gave in exchange my wealth
And a proud old family name.
And I gave her the love of a heart
Grown sated and sick of sin!
My deal with the devil was all cleaned up,
And the last bill handed in.

She was going to bring me a child,
And when in labour she cried
With love and fear I was wild—
But now I wish she had died.

For the son she bore me was blind
And crippled and weak and sore!
And his mother was left a wreck.
It was so she settled my score.

I said I must have my fling,
And they knew the path I would go;
Yet no one told me a thing
Of what I needed to know.
Folks talk too much of a soul
From heavenly joys debarred—
And not enough of the babes unborn,
By the sins of their fathers scarred.

MEDITATIONS

HIS



WAS so proud of you last night, dear
girl,

While man with man was striving
for your smile.

You never lost your head, nor once
dropped down

From your high place

As queen in that gay whirl.

(It takes more poise to wear a little crown
With modesty and grace
Than to adorn the lordlier thrones of earth.)

You seem so free from artifice and wile:
And in your eyes I read
Encouragement to my unspoken thought.
My heart is eloquent with words to plead
Its cause of passion; but my questioning mind,
Knowing how love is blind,
Dwells on the pros and cons, and God knows
what.

My heart cries with each beat,
‘She is so beautiful, so pure, so sweet,
So more than dear.’
And then I hear
The voice of Reason, asking: ‘Would she
meet
Life’s common duties with good common sense?
Could she bear quiet evening at your hearth,
And not be sighing for gay scenes of mirth?
If, some great day, love’s mighty recompense
For chastity surrendered came to her,
If she felt stir
Beneath her heart a little pulse of life,
Would she rejoice with holy pride and wonder,
And find new glory in the name of wife?
Or would she plot with hell, and seek to plunder
Love’s sanctuary, and cast away its treasure,
That she might keep her freedom and her
pleasure?
Could she be loyal mate and mother dutiful?
Or is she only some bright hothouse bloom,
Seedless and beautiful,
Meant just for decoration, and for show?’
Alone here in my room,
I hear this voice of Reason. My poor heart

Has ever but one answer to impart,
'I love her so.'

HERS

After the ball last night, when I came home
I stood before my mirror, and took note
Of all that men call beautiful. Delight,
Keen, sweet delight, possessed me, when I saw
My own reflection smiling on me there,
Because your eyes, through all the swirling
hours,

And in your slow good-night, had made a fact
Of what before I fancied might be so;
Yet knowing how men lie, by look and act,
I still had doubted. But I doubt no more,
I know you love me, love me. And I feel
Your satisfaction in my comeliness.

Beauty and youth, good health and willing mind,
A spotless reputation, and a heart
Longing for mating and for motherhood,
And lips unsullied by another's kiss—
These are the riches I can bring to you.

But as I sit here, thinking of it all
In the clear light of morning, sudden fear
Has seized upon me. What has been your past?

From out the jungle of old reckless years,
May serpents crawl across our path some day
And pierce us with their fangs? Oh, I am not
A prude or bigot; and I have not lived
A score and three full years in ignorance
Of human nature. Much I can condone;
For well I know our kinship to the earth
And all created things. Why, even I
Have felt the burden of virginity,
When flowers and birds and golden butterflies
In early spring were mating; and I know
How loud that call of sex must sound to man
Above the feeble protest of the world.
But I can hear from depths within my soul
The voices of my unborn children cry
For rightful heritage. (May God attune
The souls of men, that they may hear and heed
That plaintive voice above the call of sex;
And may the world's weak protest swell into
A thunderous diapason—a demand
For cleaner fatherhood.)

Oh, love, come near;
Look in my eyes, and say I need not fear.

DIVORCED



THINKING of one thing all day long,
at night
I fall asleep, brain weary and heart
sore;
But only for a little while. At three,
Sometimes at two o'clock, I wake and lie,
Staring out into darkness; while my thoughts
Begin the weary treadmill-toil again,
From that white marriage morning of our youth
Down to this dreadful hour.

I see your face
Lit with the lovelight of the honeymoon;
I hear your voice, that lingered on my name
As if it loved each letter; and I feel
The cling of your arms about my form,
Your kisses on my cheek—and long to break
The anguish of such memories with tears,
But cannot weep; the fountain has run dry.
We were so young, so happy, and so full

Of keen sweet joy of life. I had no wish
Outside your pleasure; and you loved me so
That when I sometimes felt a woman's need
For more serene expression of man's love
(The need to rest in calm affection's bay
And not sail ever on the stormy main),
Yet would I rouse myself to your desire;
Meet ardent kiss with kisses just as warm;
So nothing I could give should be denied.

And then our children came. Deep in my soul,
From the first hour of conscious motherhood,
I knew I should conserve myself for this
Most holy office; knew God meant it so.
Yet even then, I held your wishes first;
And by my double duties lost the bloom
And freshness of my beauty; and beheld
A look of disapproval in your eyes.
But with the coming of our precious child,
The lover's smile, tinged with the father's pride,
Returned again; and helped to make me strong;
And life was very sweet for both of us.

Another, and another birth, and twice
The little white hearse paused beside our door

And took away some portion of my youth
With my sweet babies. At the first you seemed
To suffer with me, standing very near;
But when I wept too long, you turned away.
And I was hurt, not realising then
My grief was selfish. I could see the change
Which motherhood and sorrow made in me;
And when I saw the change that came to you,
Saw how your eyes looked past me when you
talked,
And when I missed the love tone from your
voice,
I did that foolish thing weak women do,
Complained and cried, accused you of neglect,
And made myself obnoxious in your sight.

And often, after you had left my side,
Alone I stood before my mirror, mad
With anger at my pallid cheeks, my dull
Unlighted eyes, my shrunken mother-breasts,
And wept, and wept, and faded more and more.
How could I hope to win back wandering love,
And make new flames in dying embers leap,
By such ungracious means?

And then She came,
Firm-bosomed, round of cheek, with such young
eyes,
And all the ways of youth. I who had died
A thousand deaths, in waiting the return
Of that old love-look to your face once more,
Died yet again and went straight into hell
When I beheld it come at her approach.

My God, my God, how have I borne it all!
Yet since she had the power to wake that look—
The power to sweep the ashes from your heart
Of burned-out love of me, and light new fires,
One thing remained for me—to let you go.
I had no wish to keep the empty frame
From which the priceless picture had been
wrenched.

Nor do I blame you; it was not your fault:
You gave me all that most men can give—love
Of youth, of beauty, and of passion; and
I gave you full return; my womanhood
Matched well your manhood. Yet had you grown
ill,
Or old, and unattractive from some cause
(Less close than was my service unto you),

I should have clung the tighter to you, dear;
And loved you, loved you, loved you more and
more.

I grow so weary thinking of these things;
Day in, day out; and half the awful nights.

THE UNWED MOTHER TO THE WIFE



HAD been almost happy for an hour,
Lost to the world that knew me in
the park

Among strange faces; while my little
girl

Leaped with the squirrels, chirruped with the
birds

And with the sunlight glowed. She was so dear,
So beautiful, so sweet; and for the time
The rose of love, shorn of its thorn of shame,
Bloomed in my heart. Then suddenly you
passed.

I sat alone upon the public bench;
You, with your lawful husband, rode in state;
And when your eyes fell on me and my child,
They were not eyes, but daggers, poison tipped.

God! how good women slaughter with a look!
And, like cold steel, your glance cut through
my heart,

Struck every petal from the rose of love
And left the ragged stalk alive with thorns.

My little one came running to my side
And called me Mother. It was like a blow
Between the eyes; and made me sick with pain.
And then it seemed as if each bird and breeze
Took up the word, and changed its syllables
From Mother into Magdalene; and cried
My shame to all the world.

It was your eyes
Which did all this. But listen now to me
(Not you alone, but all the barren wives
Who, like you, flaunt their virtue in the face
Of fallen women) : I do chance to know
The crimes you think are hidden from all men
(Save one who took your gold and sold his skill
And jeopardized his name for your base ends).

I know how you have sunk your soul in sense
Like any wanton; and refused to bear
The harvest of your pleasure-planted seed;
I know how you have crushed the tender bud
Which held a soul; how you have blighted it;

And made the holy miracle of birth
A wicked travesty of God's design.
Yea, many buds, which might be blossoms now
And beautify your selfish, arid life,
Have been destroyed, because you chose to keep
The aimless freedom, and the purposeless,
Self-seeking liberty of childless wives.

I was an untaught girl. By nature led,
By love and passion blinded, I became
An unwed mother. You, an honoured wife,
Refuse the crown of motherhood, defy
The laws of nature, and fling baby souls
Back in the face of God. And yet you dare
Call me a sinner, and yourself a saint;
And all the world smiles on you, and its doors
Swing wide at your approach.

I stand outside.

Surely there must be, higher courts than earth,
Where you and I will some day meet and be
Weighed by a larger justice.

FATHER AND SON



Y grand-dame, vigorous at eighty-one,
Delights in talking of her only son,
My gallant father, long since dead
and gone.

‘Ah, but he was the lad!’

She says, and sighs, and looks at me askance.
How well I read the meaning of that glance—

‘Poor son of such a dad;

Poor weakling, dull and sad.’

I could, but would not, tell her bitter truth
About my father’s youth.

She says: ‘Your father laughed his way through
earth:

He laughed right in the doctor’s face at birth,
Such joy of life he had, such founts of mirth.

Ah, what a lad was he!’

And then she sighs. I feel her silent blame,
Because I brought her nothing but his name.

Because she does not see

Her worshipped son in me.

I could, but would not, speak in my defence
Anent the difference.

She says: 'He won all prizes in his time;
He overworked, and died before his prime:
At high ambition's door I lay the crime.

Ah, what a lad he was!'

Well, let her rest in that deceiving thought,
Of what avail to say, 'His death was brought
By broken sexual laws,
The ancient sinful cause.'

I could, but would not, tell the good old dame
The story of his shame.

I could say: 'I am crippled, weak, and pale,
Because my father was an unleashed male.
Because he ran so fast, I halt and fail.

(Ah, yes, he was the lad!)

Because he drained each cup of sense-delight
I must go thirsting, thirsting, day and night.

Because he was joy-mad,
I must be always sad.

Because he learned no law of self-control,
I am a blighted soul.'

Of what avail to speak and spoil her joy.

Better to see her disapproving eyes,
And silent, hear her say, between her sighs,
 ‘Ah, but he was the boy!’

THE REVEALING ANGELS



UDDENLY and without warning they
came—

The Revealing Angels came.

Suddenly and simultaneously,
through city streets,

Through quiet lanes and country roads they
walked.

They walked crying: 'God has sent us to find
The vilest sinners of earth.

We are to bring them before Him, before the
Lord of Life.'

Their voices were like bugles;

And then all war, all strife,

And all the noises of the world grew still;

And no one talked;

And no one toiled, but many strove to flee away.

Robbers and thieves, and those sunk in drunk-
enness and crime,

Men and women of evil repute,

And mothers with fatherless children in their
arms, all strove to hide.

But the Revealing Angels passed them by,
Saying: 'Not you, not you.

Another day, when we shall come again
Unto the haunts of men,

Then we will call your names;

But God has asked us first to bring to him
Those guilty of greater shames

Than lust, or theft, or drunkenness, or vice—

Yea, greater than murder done in passion,

Or self-destruction done in dark despair.

Now in His Holy Name we call:

Come one and all

Come forth; reveal your faces.'

Then through the awful silence of the world,

Where noise had ceased, they came—

The sinful hosts.

They came from lowly and from lofty places,

Some poorly clad, but many clothed like queens;

They came from scenes of revel and from toil;

From haunts of sin, from palaces, from homes,

From boudoirs, and from churches.

They came like ghosts—

*The vast brigades of women who had slain
Their helpless, unborn children. With them
trailed*

Lovers and husbands 'who had said, 'Do this,'
And those who helped for hire.

They stood before the Angels—before the Re-
vealing angels they stood.

And they heard the Angels say;

And all the listening world heard the Angels
say;

'These are the vilest sinners of all;

For the Lord of Life made sex that birth might
come;

Made sex and its keen compelling desire

To fashion bodies wherein souls might go

From lower planes to higher,

Until the end is reached (which is Beginning).

They have stolen the costly pleasures of the
senses

And refused to pay God's price.

They have come together, these men and these
women,

As male and female they have come together

In the great creative act.

They have invited souls, and then flung them
out into space;

They have made a jest of God's design.

All other sins look white beside this sinning;

All other sins may be condoned, forgiven;

All other sinners may be cleansed and shriven;

Not these, not these.

Pass on, and meet God's eyes.'

The vast brigade moved forward, and behind
them walked the Angels,

Walked the sorrowful Revealing Angels.

THE NEW YEAR SHIP



CROSS wide seas of space, from God's
own bay,
Straight to the shores of earth it
ploughed its way,
And came, full rigged, to anchor in
the night.

Its sails lie clean against the morning light;
And on the bridge old Captain Time is standing,
Proud of the brave new craft he is commanding.

My heart runs dockward, crying, 'Ship ahoy!
What cargo do you carry—pain or joy?
Before the crew of Days shall come ashore,
Bearing each one his portion of your store—
Tell me what things are hidden in your hold?'

There is no answer. Yet I do make bold
To prophesy some things Time keeps for me
In that great New Year ship.

First there will be
Keen Winter mornings, when the sun and frost
Wage bloodless battle, with their daggers
crossed.

The wind will act as second for the sun,
While trees stand steadfast for the other one.
Ah! such rare sport!

There will be Spring's return,
When in old hearts young blood again will burn,
And young buds deck old trees; while in the
skies

Vast dawns and sunsets startle and surprise
A waking world to wonder.

There will come
Roses so beauteous they strike one dumb;
(A perfect rose is beauty's final word!)
While in their scent old memories are stirred
Of other scenes and times.

Then Autumn's brush
Shall paint the earth before the final hush
That means a dying year. Ah! Captain Time,
You cannot cheat me of these gifts sublime,
(And countless others that I have not told).
Whatever else you bring me—or withhold.

THINKING OF CHRIST



THINKING of Christ, and hearing what
men say

Anent His second coming some near
day;

Unto the me of Me, I turned to ask,
What can we do for Him, and by what task,
Or through what sacrifice, can we proclaim
Our mighty love, and glorify His name?

Whereon myself replied (thinking of Christ):
Has not God's glory unto Him sufficed?
What need has He of temples that men raise?
What need has He of any songs of praise?
Not sacrifice nor offerings needs He.
(Thinking of Christ, so spake Myself to me.)

The rivers from the mountain do not try
To feed the source from which they gain supply;
They pay their debt by flowing on and down,
And carrying comfort to the field and town.

They scatter joy and beauty on their course,
In gratitude to the Eternal Source.

And thus should we (thinking of Christ) bestow
The full sweet tides of love that through us flow
Upon earth's weaker creatures. To the less
Must flow the greater, would we lift and bless.
Christ is the mountain source; each heart a
river;

The thirsting meadows need us, not the Giver.

Thinking of Christ, let us proclaim His worth
By gracious deeds to mortals on this earth:
And while we wait His coming, let us bring
Sweet love and pity to the humblest thing,
And show our voiceless kin of air and sod
The mercy of the Universal God.

Not by long prayers, though prayers renew our
grace—

Not by tall spires, though steeples have their
place—

Not by our faith, though faith is glorious—
Can we prove Christ, but *by the love in us*.
Mercy and love and kindness—seek these three.
Thus (thinking of Christ) Myself said unto me.

THE TRAVELLER



RISTLING with steeples, high against
the hill,

Like some great thistle in the rosy
dawn

It stood; the Town-of-Christian-
Churches, stood.

The Traveller surveyed it with a smile.

‘Surely,’ He said, ‘here is the home of peace;
Here neighbour lives with neighbour in accord,
God in the heart of all; else why these spires?’
(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

The sudden shriek of whistles changed the sound
From mellow music into jarring noise.

Then down the street pale hurrying children
came,

And vanished in the yawning Factory door.

He called to them: ‘Come back, come unto Me.’
The Foreman cursed, and caned Him from the
place.

(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

Forth from two churches came two men, and
met,

Disputing loudly over boundary lines,

Hate in their eyes, and murder in their hearts.

A haughty woman drew her skirts aside

Because her fallen sister passed that way.

The Traveller rebuked them all. Amazed,

They asked in indignation, 'Who are you,

Daring to interfere in private lives?'

The Traveller replied, 'My name is CHRIST.'

(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

I



WHAT have you done, and what are you
doing with life, O Man!

O Average Man of the world—

Average Man of the Christian world
we call civilised?

What have you done to pay for the labour pains
of the mother who bore you?

On earth you occupy space; you consume oxy-
gen from the air:

And what do you give in return for these
things?

Who is better that you live, and strive, and toil?
Or that you live through the toiling and striving
of others?

As you pass down the street does any one look
on you and say,

‘There goes a good son, a true husband, a wise
father, a fine citizen?

A man whose strong hand is ready to help a
neighbour,

A man to trust'? And what do women say of
you?

Unto their own souls what do women say?

Do they say: 'He helped to make the road easier
for tired feet?

To broaden the narrow horizon for aching eyes?

He helped us to higher ideals of womanhood'?

Look into your own heart and answer, O Average
Man of the world,

Of the Christian world we call civilised.

II

What do men think of you, what do they think
and say of you,

O Average Woman of the world?

Do they say: 'There is a woman with a great
heart,

Loyal to her sex, and above envy and evil
speaking:

There is a daughter, wife, mother, with a pur-
pose in life:

She can be trusted to mould the minds of little
children:

She knows how to be good without being dull;
How to be glad and to make others glad without
descending to folly;

She is one who illuminates the path wherein she
walks;

One who awakens the best in every human being
she meets'?

Look into your heart, O Woman! and answer
this:

What are you doing with the beautiful years?
Is your to-day a better thing than was your
yesterday?

Have you grown in knowledge, grace, and use-
fulness?

Or are you ravelling out the wonderful fabric
knit by Time,

And throwing away the threads?

Make answer, O Woman! Average Woman of
the Christian world.

THE UNDERTONE



WHEN I was very young I used to feel
the dark despair of youth;
Out of my little griefs I would invent
great tragedies and woes;
Not only for myself, but for all those
I held most dear
I would invent vast sorrows in my melancholy
moods of thought.
Yet down deep, deep in my heart there was an
undertone of rapture.
It was like a voice from some other world calling
softly to me,
Saying things joyful.

As I grew older, and Life offered bitter gall
for me to drink,
Forcing it through clenched teeth when I refused
to take it willingly;
When Pain prepared some special anguish for
my heart to bear,

And all the things I longed for seemed to be
wholly beyond my reach—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there was an
undertone of rapture.

It was like a Voice, a Voice from some other
world calling to me,
Bringing glad tidings.

Now when I look about me, and see the great
injustices of men,

See Idleness and Greed waited upon by luxury
and mirth,

See prosperous Vice ride by in state, while foot-
sore Virtue walks;

Now when I hear the cry of need rise up from
lands of shameful wealth—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there is an
undertone of rapture.

It is like a Voice—it is a Voice—calling to me
and saying:

‘Love rules triumphant.’

Now when each mile-post on the path of life
seems marked by headstones,

And one by one dear faces that I loved are hid
away from sight;

Now when in each familiar home I see a vacant
chair,

And in the throngs once formed of friends I
meet unrecognising eyes—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there is an
undertone of rapture.

It is the Voice, it is the Voice forever saying
unto me:

‘Life is Eternal.’

GYPSYING



YPSYING, gypsyng, through the
world together,

Never mind the way we go, never
mind what port.

Follow trails, or fashion sails, start
in any weather:

While we journey hand in hand, everything is
sport.

Gypsyng, gypsyng, leaving care and worry:
Never mind the 'if' and 'but' (words for cow-
ard lips).

Put them out with 'fear' and 'doubt,' in the
pack with 'hurry,'

While we stroll like vagabonds forth to trails,
or ships.

Gypsyng, gypsyng, just where fancy calls us;
Never mind what others say, or what others do.

Everywhere or foul or fair, liking what befalls
us; .

While you have me at your side, and while I
have you.

Gypsying, gypsying, camp by hill or hollow;
Never mind the why of it, since it suits our
mood.

Go or stay, and pay our way, and let those who
follow

Find, unspringing from the soil, some small seed
of good.

Gypsying, gypsying, through the world we
wander:

Never mind the rushing years, that have come
and gone.

There must be for you and me, lying over
Yonder,

Other lands, where side by side we can gypsy on.

DANCE OF THE SONG OF THE
SYLPHIDES

The unwritten law of the ancient Egyptians demanded that a famous dancer or singer should retire at the height of her career, or die. Amaremu, the wonderful dancer, confessed to the Priest of the Temple that she had decided to die after dancing the Song of the Sylphides. The Priest, who was a great musician, asked her to rehearse the dance for him and he would improvise music for it. The verses are written on the story as related in a papyrus found by Dr. Paul Schlie-mann in the recent excavations of the Temple of Sais. The instrument used by the Priest was a horn fashioned from a human skull. It was known as the Dead Throat, the Skull Horn, and was used in all great orchestras in ancient Egypt.



MAREMU the dancer (oh, a dancer
of dreams was Amaremu)

Unto the Priest of the Temple, the
Temple of Sais, drew nigh.

She had reached the height of her
triumph, and now, as all men knew,
She must dance no more, or die.

Amaremu the dancer (oh, Amaremu was a
dancer of songs)

Unto the Priest of the Temple, the Temple of
Sais, said:

'I will dance the Song of the Sylphides once
more for the waiting throngs;
Then go my way with the dead.'

Then answered the Priest to the dancer (to
Amaremu, dancer of love):
'Show me the dance of the Sylphides and teach
me its rhythm and time;
I will shape you an air on the Skull Horn; I
will play for you as you move
Through the Song of the wordless rhyme.'

Amaremu the dancer (dancer of anthems and
hymns to the sun)
Danced in the Temple of Sais, alone for the
Priest who played.
Slowly the notes from the Skull Horn came
quivering one by one,
And slowly the dancer swayed.

Slowly at first, then faster, swayed Amaremu,
dancer of life's delight;
And faster and louder and wilder the notes of
the Skull Horn grew;

And the Priest was a priest no longer, but a
man alone at night
With the dancer Amaremu.

Faster and wilder and madder danced Ama-
remu, danced Amaremu;
She flung down garment by garment; she tore
off veil by veil;
And the face of the Priest was pallid, and his
breath came hard as he drew
From the Skull Horn, sounds like a wail.

Amaremu the dancer (the dancer of dream, and
song, or rite and feast,
Dancer of mighty emotions, dancer of terrible
joys)
Stood nude in the Temple of Sais, stood nude
before the Priest,
In the beauty that destroys.

Amaremu the dancer (oh, Amaremu was dance
and song and dream)
Stood white in her awful beauty while the pale
Priest brought a note

Like the mingled shout of a devil and a soul's
despairing scream
From the Skull Horn's hollow throat.

Amaremu the dancer (the dancer of the Syl-
phides' Song of Death)
Had finished her dance of passion, and the
Priest had ceased to play.
And white as a marble statue, like a statue with-
out breath,
In the dead Priest's arms she lay.

THE BIRTH OF THE ORCHID



WRAPPED in her robe of amethyst
Rose the young Dawn.
Pallid with passion came the Mist,
And followed on,
Fleet as a fawn.
Down by the sea they clasped and kissed:
Swooned the young Dawn.

Out of that kiss of dew and flame
The orchid came.

STAIRWAYS AND GARDENS



GARDENS and Stairways; those are
words that thrill me
Always with vague suggestions of
delight.

Stairways and Gardens. Mystery and
grace

Seem part of their environment; they fill me
With memories of things veiled from my sight,
In some far place.

Gardens. The word is overcharged with mean-
ing.

It speaks of moonlight and a closing door.
Of birds at dawn—of sultry afternoons.

Gardens. I seem to see low branches screening
A vine-roofed arbour with a leaf-tiled floor,
Where sunlight swoons.

Stairways. The word winds upward to a land-
ing;

Then curves and vanishes in space above.

Lights fall, lights rise ; soft lights that meet and
blend.

Stairways ; and some one at the bottom standing
Expectantly with lifted looks of love.
Then steps descend.

Gardens and stairways. They belong with
song—

With subtle scents of myrrh and musk—
With dawn and dusk—with youth, romance, and
mystery,

And times that were and times that are to be.
Stairways and gardens.

SONG OF THE ROAD



AM a Road; a good road, fair and
smooth and broad;
And I link with my beautiful tether
Town and Country together,
Like a ribbon rolled on the earth,
from the reel of God.

Oh, great the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a long road, leading on and on;
And I cry to the world to follow,
Past meadow and hill and hollow,
Through desolate night, to the open gates of
dawn.

Oh, bold the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a kind road, shaped by strong
hands.

I make strange cities neighbours;
The poor grow rich with my labours,

And beauty and comfort follow me through the
lands.

Oh, glad the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a wise road, knowing all men's
ways;

And I know how each heart reaches

For the things dear Nature teaches;

And I am the path that leads into green young
Mays.

Oh, sweet the life of a Road!

I am a Road; and I speed away from the slums,
Away from desolate places,
Away from unused spaces;

Wherever I go, there order from chaos comes.

Oh, brave the life of a Road!

I am a Road; and I would make the whole world
one.

I would give hope to duty,

And cover the earth with beauty.

Do you not see, O men! how all this might be
done?

So vast the power of the Road!

THE FORECAST



*T may be that I dreamed a dream; it
may be that I saw
The forecast of a time to come, by
some supernal law.*

I seemed to dwell in this same world,
and in this modern time;
All strife had ceased; men were disarmed; and
quiet Peace had made
A thousand avenues for toil, in place of War's
crime trade.
From east to west, from north to south, where
highways smooth and broad
Tied State to State, the waste lands bloomed,
like garden spots of God.
There were no beggars in the streets; there were
no unemployed;
For each man owned his plot of ground, and
laboured and enjoyed.
Sweet children grew like garden flowers, all
strong and fair to see;

And when I marvelled at the sight, thus spake
a Voice to me :

‘All Motherhood is now an art, the greatest art
on earth ;

And nowhere is there known the crime of one
unwelcome birth.

From rights of parentage the sick and sinful
are debarred ;

For Matron Science keeps our house, and at the
door stands guard.

We know the cure for darkness lies in letting
in the light ;

And Prisons are replaced by Schools, where
wrong views change to right.

The wisdom, knowledge, study, thought, once
bent on beast and sod,

We give now to the human race, the highest
work of God ;

And, as the gardener chooses seed, so we select
with care ;

And as our Man Plant grows, we give him soil
and sun and air.

There are no slums ; no need of alms ; all men
are opulent,

For Mother Earth belongs to them, as was the
First Intent.'

*It may be that I dreamed a dream; it may be
that I saw*

*The forecast of a time to come, by some supernal
law.*

THE FAITH WE NEED



Too tall our structures, and too swift
our pace;
Not so we mount, not so we gain the
race.

Too loud the voice of commerce in
the land;

Not so truth speaks, not so we understand.

Too vast our conquests, and too large our gains;
Not so comes peace, not so the soul attains.

But the need of the world is a faith that will
live anywhere;

In the still dark depths of the woods, or out in
the sun's full glare.

A faith that can hear God's voice, alike in the
quiet glen,

Or in the roar of the street, and over the noises
of men.

And the need of the world is a creed that is
founded on joy;

A creed with the turrets of hope and trust, no
winds can destroy ;

A creed where the soul finds rest, whatever this
life bestows,

And dwells undoubting and unafraid, because
it knows, it knows.

And the need of the world is love that burns in
the heart like flame ;

A love for the Giver of Life, in sorrow or joy
the same ;

A love that blazes a trail to God, through the
dark and the cold,

Or keeps the pathway that leads to Him clean,
through glory and gold.

For the faith that can only thrive or grow in
the solitude,

And droops and dies in the marts of men, where
sights and sounds are rude ;

That is not a faith at all, but a dream of a
mystic's heart.

Our faith should point as the compass points,
whatever be the chart.

Our faith must find its centre of peace in a
babel of noise ;

In the changing ways of the world of men it
must keep its poise;
And over the sorrowing sounds of earth it must
hear God's call;
And the faith that cannot do all this, that is
not faith at all.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED



OW ere I slept, my prayer had been
that I might see my way
To do the will of Christ, our Lord
and Master, day by day;
And with this prayer upon my lips,
I knew not that I dreamed,
But suddenly the world of night
a pandemonium seemed.
From forest, and from slaughter house,
from bull ring, and from stall,
There rose an anguished cry of pain,
a loud, appealing call;
As man—the dumb beast's next of kin—
with gun, and whip, and knife,
Went pleasure-seeking through the earth,
blood-bent on taking life.
From trap, and cage, and house, and zoo,
and street, that awful strain
Of tortured creatures rose and swelled
the orchestra of pain.

And then methought the gentle Christ
appeared to me, and spoke :
‘I called ye, but ye answered not’—
and in my fear I woke.

The next I heard the roar of mills ;
and moving through the noise,
Like phantoms in an underworld,
were little girls and boys.
Their backs were bent, their brows were pale,
their eyes were sad and old ;
But by the labour of their hands
greed added gold to gold.
Again the Presence and the Voice :
‘Behold the crimes I see,
As ye have done it unto these,
so have ye done to me.’

Again I slept. I seemed to climb
a hard, ascending track ;
And just behind me laboured one
whose patient face was black.
I pitied him ; but hour by hour
he gained upon the path ;

He stood beside me, stood upright—
and then I turned in wrath.

‘Go back!’ I cried. ‘What right have you
to walk beside me here?’

For you are black, and I am white.’

I paused, struck dumb with fear.
For lo! the black man was not there,
but Christ stood in his place;
And oh! the pain, the pain, the pain
that looked from that dear face.

Now when I woke, the air was rife
with that sweet, rhythmic din
Which tells the world that Christ has come
to save mankind from sin.

And through the open door of church
and temple passed a throng,
To worship Him with bended knee,
with sermon, and with song.

But over all I heard the cry
of hunted, mangled things;
Those creatures which are part of God,
though they have hoofs and wings.
I saw in mill, and mine, and shop,
the little slaves of greed;

I heard the strife of race with race,
all sprung from one God-seed.
And then I bowed my head in shame,
and in contrition cried—
‘Lo, after nineteen hundred years
Christ still is Crucified.’

THE PLOUGH



F you listen, you will hear from east
to west,

Growing sounds of discontent and
deep unrest.

It is just the progress-driven plough
of God,

Tearing up the well-worn custom-bounded sod;
Shaping out each old tradition-trodden track
Into furrows, fertile furrows, rich and black.

Oh, what harvests they will yield
When they widen to a field.

They will widen, they will broaden, day by day,
As the Progress-driven plough keeps on its way.
It will riddle all the ancient roads that lead
Into palaces of selfishness and greed;
It will tear away the almshouse and the slum
That the little homes and garden plots may come.
Yes, the gardens green and sweet
Shall replace the stony street.

Let the wise man hear the menace that is blent
In this ever-growing sound of discontent.
Let him hear the rising clamour of the race
That the few shall yield the many larger space.
For the crucial hour is coming when the soil
Must be given to, or taken back by Toil.
Oh, that mighty plough of God;
Hear it breaking through the sod!

THE EARTH

I



O build a house, with love for architect,
Ranks first and foremost in the joys
of life.

And in a tiny cabin, shaped for two,
The space for happiness is just as great
As in a palace. What a world were this
If each soul born, received a plot of ground;
A little plot, whereon a home might rise,
And beauteous green things grow!

We give the dead,
The idle vagrant dead, the Potter's Field;
Yet to the living not one inch of soil.
Nay, we take from them soil, and sun, and air,
To fashion slums and hell-holes for the race.
And to our poor we say, 'Go starve and die
As beggars die; so gain your heritage.'

II

That was a most uncanny dream; I thought the
wraiths of those

Long buried in the Potter's Field, in shredded
shrouds arose ;

They said, 'Against the will of God
We have usurped the fertile sod,
Now will we make it yield.'

Oh! but it was a gruesome sight, to see those
phantoms toil ;

Each to his own small garden bent ; each spaded
up the soil ;

(I never knew Ghosts laboured so.)
Each scattered seed, and watched, till lo!
The Graves were opulent.

Then all among the fragrant greens, the silent,
spectral train

Walked, as if breathing in the breath of plant,
and flower, and grain.

(I never knew Ghosts loved such things ;
Perchance it brought back early springs
Before they thought of death.)

'The mothers' milk for living babes ; the earth
for living hosts ;

The clean flame for the un-souled dead.' (Oh,
strange the words of Ghosts.)

'If we had owned this little spot
In life, we need not lie and rot
Here in a pauper's bed.'

SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER comes along the great
green way
That Spring and Summer fashioned
for our feet.

And though her face is beautiful
and sweet,

Though gracious smiles about her ripe mouth
play,

Yet subtle recollections of each day
Of idleness in her large look I meet.

All things achieved stand small and incomplete
Beside the boastful promises of May!

Now I berate fair June, who tempted me
With fragrant beds of roses, and as well
Her siren sisters, who were following near;
But most of all I do accuse the Sea.

Reach me thine hand, and help me break the
spell,

September, matron-mentor of the year!

OCTOBER

SHE



ONE are the Spring and Summer
from the year;
And from our lives as well. May
we not, dear,

In our October find serene delights
To take the place of ardent summer nights?
Not striving to retain a dying season,
Or imitate its pleasures, but with reason
Accepting Autumn's quiet, briefer day
Of calm content, not seeking to be gay?

HE

Gone are the Spring and Summer; yet behold
The radiant woods, supreme in red and gold
And russet colours; and the wind harp plays
A louder song than in the April days.
Our lives need not be colourless or sober
Because of Autumn. Emulate October,
Who will not let the ageing years grow dull,
But keep its love by being beautiful.

TWO VOICES

VIRTUE



WANTON one, O wicked one, how
was it that you came,
Down from the paths of purity, to
walk the streets of shame?
And wherefore was that precious
wealth, God gave to you in trust,
Flung broadcast for the feet of men to trample
in the dust?

VICE

O prudent one, O spotless one, now listen well
to me.
The ways that led to where I tread these paths
of sin, were three:
And God, and good folks, all combined to make
them fair to see.

VIRTUE

O wicked one, blasphemous one, now how could
that thing be?

VICE

The first was Nature's lovely road, whereon my
life was hurled.

I felt the stirring in my blood, which permeates
the world.

I thrilled like willows in the spring, when sap
begins to flow;

It was young passion in my veins, but how was
I to know?

The second was the silent road, where modest
mothers dwell,

And hide from eager, curious minds, the truth
they ought to tell.

That misnamed road called 'Innocence' should
bear the sign 'To Hell.'

With song and dance in ignorance I walked that
road and fell.

VIRTUE

O fallen one, unhappy one, but why not rise
and go

Back to the ways you left behind, and leave your
sins below,

Nor linger in this sink of sin, since now you see,
and know?

VICE

The third road was the fair highway, trod by the
good and great.

I cried aloud to that vast crowd, and told my
hapless fate.

They hurried all through door and wall and
shut Convention's gate.

I beat it with my bleeding hands: they must
have heard me knock.

They must have heard wild sob and word, yet
no one turned the lock.

Oh, it is very desolate, on Virtue's path to
stand,

And see the good folks flocking by, withholding
look and hand.

And so with hungry heart and soul, and weary
brain and feet,

I left that highway whence you came, and sought
the sinful street.

O prudent one, O spotless one, when good folks
speak of me,

Go, tell them of the roads I came; the road-
ways fair, and three.

THE GRADUATES



SAW them beautiful, in fair array
upon Commencement Day;
Lissome and lovely, radiant and
sweet

As cultured roses, brought to their
estate

By careful training. Finished and complete
(As teachers calculate).

They passed in maiden grace along the aisle,
Leaving the chaste white sunlight of a smile
Upon the gazing throng.

Musing I thought upon their place as mothers
of the race.

Oh there are many actors who can play
Greatly, great parts; but rare indeed the soul
Who can be great when cast for some small
rôle;

Yet that is what the world most needs; big hearts

That will shine forth and glorify poor parts
In this strange drama, Life! Do they,
Who in full dress-rehearsal pass to-day
Before admiring eyes, hold in their store
Those fine high principles which keep old Earth
From being only earth; and make men more
Than just mere men? How will they prove
their worth

Of years of study? Will they walk abroad
Decked with the plumage of dead bards of God,
The glorious birds? And shall the lamb unborn
Be slain on altars of their vanity?

To some frail sister who has missed the way
Will they give Christ's compassion, or man's
scorn?

And will clean manhood, linked with honest
love,

The victor prove,

When riches, gained by greed dispute the claim?
Will they guard well a husband's home and
name,

Or lean down from their altitudes to hear
The voice of flattery speak in the ear
Those lying platitudes which men repeat
To listening Self-Conceit?

Musing I thought upon their places as mothers
of the race,
As beautiful they passed in maiden grace.

THE LEADER TO BE



WHAT shall the leader be in that great
day

When we who sleep and dream that
we are slaves

Shall wake and know that Liberty
is ours?

Mark well that word—not yours, not mine, but
ours:

For through the mingling of the separate streams
Of individual protest and desire,
In one united sea of purpose, lies
The course to Freedom.

When Progression takes
Her undisputed right of way, and sinks
The old traditions and conventions where
They may not rise, what shall the leader be?

No mighty warrior skilled in crafts of war,
Sowing earth's fertile furrows with dead men

And staining crimson God's cerulean sea,
To prove his prowess to a shuddering world.
No ruler, purchased by the perjured votes
Of striving demagogues whose god is gold.
Not one of these shall lead to Liberty.
The weakness of the world cries out for strength.
The sorrow of the world cries out for hope.
Its suffering cries for kindness.

He who leads
Must then be strong and hopeful as the dawn
That rises unafraid and full of joy
Above the blackness of the darkest night.
He must be kind to every living thing;
Kind as the Krishna, Buddha, and the Christ,
And full of love for all created life.
Oh, not in war shall his great prowess lie,
Nor shall he find his pleasure in the chase.
Too great for slaughter, friend of man and
beast,
Touching the borders of the Unseen Realms
And bringing down to earth their mystic fires
To light our troubled pathways, wise and kind,
And human to the core, so shall he be
The coming leader of the coming time.

DISARMAMENT



WE have outgrown the helmet and
cuirass,
The spear, the arrow, and the javelin.
These crude inventions of a cruder
age,

When men killed men to show their love of God,
And he who slaughtered most was greatest king.
We have outgrown the need of war! Should men
Unite in this one thought, all war would end.

Disarm the world; and let all Nations meet
Like Men, not monsters, when disputes arise.
When crossed opinions tangle into snarls,
Let Courts untie them, and not armies cut.
When state discussions breed dissensions, let
Union and Arbitration supersede
The hell-created implements of War.
Disarm the world! and bid destructive thought

Slip like a serpent from the mortal mind
Down through the marshes of oblivion. Soon
A race of gods shall rise! Disarm! Disarm!

THE EDICT OF THE SEX



TWO thousand years had passed since
Christ was born,

When suddenly there rose a mighty
host

Of women, sweeping to a central
goal

As many rivers sweep on to the sea.

They came from mountains, valleys, and from
coasts

And from all lands, all nations, and all ranks,
Speaking all languages, but thinking one.

And that one language—Peace.

‘Listen,’ they said,

And straightway was there silence on the earth,
For men were dumb with wonder and surprise.

‘Listen, O mighty masters of the world,

And hear the edict of all womankind:

Since Christ His new commandment gave to
men,

"Love one another," full two thousand years
Have passed away, yet earth is red with blood.
The strong male rulers of the world proclaim
Their weakness, when we ask that war shall
cease.

Now will the poor weak women of the world
Proclaim their strength, and say that war shall
end.

Hear, then, our edict: Never from this day
Will any woman on the crust of earth
Mother a warrior. We have sworn the oath
And will go barren to the waiting tomb
Rather than breed strong sons at war's behest,
Or bring fair daughters into life, to bear
The pains of travail, for no end but war.
Ay! let the race die out for lack of babes:
Better a dying race than endless wars!
Better a silent world than noise of guns
And clash of armies.

 'Long we asked for peace,
And oft you promised—but to fight again.
At last you told us, war must ever be
While men existed, laughing at our plea
For the disarmament of all mankind.

Then in our hearts flamed such a mad desire
For peace on earth, as lights the world at times
With some great conflagration; and it spread
From distant land to land, from sea to sea,
Until all women thought as with one mind
And spoke as with one voice; and now behold!
The great Crusading Syndicate of Peace,
Filling all space with one supreme resolve.
Give us, O men, your word that war shall end:
Disarm the world, and we will give you sons—
Sons to construct, and daughters to adorn
A beautiful new earth, where there shall be
Fewer and finer people, opulence
And opportunity and peace for all.
Until you promise peace no shrill birth-cry
Shall sound again upon the ageing earth.
We wait your answer.'

And the world was still.

While men considered.

THE SPINSTER

I



HERE are the orchard trees all large
with fruit;
And yonder fields are golden with
young grain.

In little journeys, branchward from
the nest,

A mother bird, with sweet insistent cries,
Urges her young to use their untried wings.
A purring Tabby, stretched upon the sward,
Shuts and expands her velvet paws in joy,
While sturdy kittens nuzzle at her breast.

O mighty Maker of the Universe,
Am I not part and parcel of Thy World,
And one with Nature? Wherefore, then, in me
Must this great reproductive impulse lie
Hidden, ashamed, unnourished, and denied,
Until it starves to slow and tortuous death?
I knew the hope of springtime; like the tree

Now ripe with fruit, I budded, and then
bloomed;

We laughed together through the young May
morns;

We dreamed together through the summer
moons;

Till all Thy purposes within the tree

Were to fruition brought. Lord, Thou hast
heard

The Woman in me crying for the Man;

The Mother in me crying for the Child;

And made no answer. Am I less to Thee

Than lower forms of Nature, or in truth

Dost Thou hold Somewhere in another Realm

Full compensation and large recompense

For lonely virtue forced by fate to live

A life unnatural, in a natural world?

II

Thou who hast made for such sure purposes

The mightiest and the meanest thing that is—

Planned out the lives of insects of the air

With fine precision and consummate care;

Thou who hast taught the bee the secret power

Of carrying on love's laws 'twixt flower and
flower;

Why didst Thou shape this mortal frame of
mine,
If Heavenly joys alone were Thy design?
Wherefore the wonder of my woman's breast,
By lips of lover and of babe unpressed,
If spirit children only shall reply
Unto my ever urgent mother cry?
Why should the rose be guided to its own,
And my love-craving heart beat on alone?

III

Yet do I understand; for Thou hast made
Something more subtle than this heart of me;
A finer part of me
To be obeyed.

Albeit I am a sister to the earth,
This nature self is not the whole of me;
The deathless soul of me
Has nobler birth.

The primal woman hungers for the man;
My better self demands the mate of me;
The spirit fate of me,
Part of Thy plan.

Nature is instinct with the mother-need;
So is my heart; but ah, the child of me
Should, undefiled of me,
Spring from love's seed.

And if, in barren chastity, I must
Know but in dreams that perfect choice of me,
Still will the voice of me
Proclaim God just.

THE CURE



YOU may talk of reformations, of the
Economic Plan,

That shall stem the Social Evil in
its course;

But the Ancient Sin of nations,
must be got at in THE MAN.

If you want to cleanse a river, seek the source.

Ever since his first beginning, Man has had his
way in lust.

He has never learned the law of Self-Control;
And the World condones his sinning, and the
Doctors say he must,

And the Churches shut their eyes, and take
his toll.

And the lauded 'Lovely Mothers' send the son
out into life

With no knowledge-welded armour for the
fight;

'He will make his way like others, through the
Oat field, to the Wife';

'He will somehow be led onward, to the light.'
Yes, his leaders, they shall find him. On the
highways at each turn;

(Since you did not choose to counsel or to
warn,)

They shall tempt him, then shall bind him; they
shall blight, and they shall burn,
Down to offspring and descendants yet un-
born.

It can never end through preaching; it can
never end through laws;

This social sore, no punishment can heal.

*It must be the mother's teaching of the purpose,
and the cause,*

And God's glory, lying under sex appeal.

She must feel no fear to name it to the children
it has brought;

She must speak of it as sacred, and sublime;
She must beautify, not shame it, by her speech
and by her thought;

Till they listen, and respect it, for all time.

From the heart they rested under ere they saw
the light of day,
Must the daughters and the sons be taught
this truth;
Till they think of it with wonder, as a holy
thing alway;
While love's wisdom guides them safely
through their youth.

Oh, the world has made its devil, and the
Mothers let it grow;
And the Man has dragged their thoughts
down to the earth.
There will be no Social Evil, when each waking
mind shall know
All the grandeur and the beauty hid in birth.

When each Mother sets the fashion to win con-
fidence, and trust,
And to teach the mighty lesson, Self-Control;
We can lift the great Sex passion from the
darkness and the dust,
And enshrine it on the altar of the soul.

THE CREED



WHOEVER was begotten by pure love,
And came desired and welcomed into
life,
Is of immaculate conception. He
Whose heart is full of tenderness and
truth,

Who loves mankind more than he loves himself,
And cannot find room in his heart for hate,
May be another Christ. We all may be
The Saviours of the world, if we believe
In the Divinity which dwells in us
And worship it, and nail our grosser selves,
Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims,
Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,
Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,
And lends new courage to each fainting heart,
And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,
He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

THE HEIGHTS



CRIED, 'Dear Angel, lead me to the
heights,

And spur me to the top.'

The Angel answered, 'Stop

And set thy house in order; make
it fair

For absent ones who may be speeding there;
Then will we talk of heights.'

I put my house in order. 'Now lead on!'

The Angel said, 'Not yet;

Thy garden is beset

By thorns and tares; go weed it, so all those
Who come to gaze may find the unvexed rose;
Then will we journey on.'

I weeded well my garden. 'All is done.'

The Angel shook his head.

'A beggar stands,' he said,

'Outside thy gates; till thou hast given heed

And soothed his sorrow, and supplied his need,
Say not that all is done.'

The beggar left me singing. 'Now at last—
At last the path is clear.'

'Nay, there is one draws near
Who seeks, like thee, the difficult highway.
He lacks thy courage; cheer him through the
day;

Then will we cry, "At last!"'

I helped my weaker brother. 'Now the heights;
Oh, Guide me, Angel, guide!'

The Presence at my side,
With radiant face, said, 'Look, where are we
now?'

And lo! we stood upon the mountain's brow—
The heights, the shining heights!

A MAN'S IDEAL



LOVELY little keeper of the home,
Absorbed in menu books, yet erudite
When I need counsel; quick at
repartee

And slow to anger. Modest as a
flower,

Yet scintillant and radiant as a star.

Unmercenary in her mould of mind,

While opulent and dainty in her tastes.

A nature generous and free, albeit

The incarnation of economy.

She must be chaste as proud Diana was,

Yet warm as Venus. To all others cold

As some white glacier glittering in the sun;

To me as ardent as the sensuous rose

That yields its sweetness to the burrowing bee.

All ignorant of evil in the world,

And innocent as any cloistered nun,

Yet wise as Phryne in the arts of love

When I come thirsting to her nectared lips.

Good as the best, and tempting as the worst,

A saint, a siren, and a paradox.

THE RIVER



AM a river flowing from God's sea
Through devious ways. He mapped
my course for me;
I cannot change it; mine alone the
toil

To keep the waters free from grime and soil.
The winding river ends where it began;
And when my life has compassed its brief span
I must return to that mysterious source.
So let me gather daily on my course
The perfume from the blossoms as I pass;
Balm from the pines, and healing from the
grass;
And carry down my current as I go
Not common stones but precious gems to show.
And tears (the holy water from sad eyes)
Back to God's sea, from which all rivers rise,
Let me convey, not blood from wounded hearts
Nor poison which the upas tree imparts.
When over flowery vales I leap with joy,

Let me not devastate them, nor destroy,
But rather leave them fairer to the sight;
Mine be the lot to comfort and delight.
And if down awful chasms I needs must leap,
Let me not murmur at my lot, but sweep
On bravely to the end without one fear,
Knowing that He who planned my ways stands
near.

Love sent me forth, to Love I go again,
For Love is all, and over all. Amen.

UNANSWERED PRAYERS



LIKE some schoolmaster, kind in being
stern,

Who hears the children crying o'er
their slates

And calling, 'Help me, master!' yet
helps not,

Since in his silence and refusal lies
Their self-development, so God abides
Unheeding many prayers. He is not deaf
To any cry sent up from earnest hearts;
He hears and strengthens when He must deny.
He sees us weeping over life's hard sums;
But should He give the key and dry our tears,
What would it profit us when school were done
And not one lesson mastered?

What a world
Were this if all our prayers were answered. Not
In famed Pandora's box were such vast ills
As lie in human hearts. Should our desires,

Voiced one by one in prayer, ascend to God
And come back as events shaped to our wish,
What chaos would result!

In my fierce youth
I sighed out breath enough to move a fleet,
Voicing wild prayers to heaven for fancied boons
Which were denied; and that denial bends
My knee to prayers of gratitude each day
Of my maturer years. Yet from those prayers
I rose alway regirded for the strife
And conscious of new strength. Pray on, sad
heart,
That which thou pleadest for may not be given,
But in the lofty altitude where souls
Who supplicate God's grace are lifted, there
Thou shalt find help to bear thy daily lot
Which is not elsewhere found.

ILLUSION



OD and I in space alone
And nobody else in view.
'And where are the people, O Lord,'
I said,
'The earth below, and the sky o'er-
head,
And the dead whom once I knew?'

'That was a dream,' God smiled and said—
'A dream that seemed to be true.
There were no people, living or dead,
There was no earth, and no sky o'erhead;
There was only Myself—in you.'

'Why do I feel no fear,' I asked,
'Meeting You here this way?
For I have sinned I know full well!
And is there heaven, and is there hell,
And is this the judgment day?'

‘Nay, those were but dreams,’ the Great God
said,

‘Dreams, that have ceased to be.

There are no such things as fear or sin,

There is no you—you never have been—

There is nothing at all but *Me.*’

THE BIRTH OF JEALOUSY



WITH brooding mien and sultry eyes,
Outside the gates of Paradise
Eve sat, and fed the faggot flame
That lit the path whence Adam
came.

(Strange are the workings of a woman's mind.)

His giant shade preceded him,
Along the pathway green, and dim;
She heard his swift approaching tread,
But still she sat with drooping head.
(Dark are the jungles of unhappy thought.)

He kissed her mouth, and gazed within
Her troubled eyes; for since their sin,
His love had grown a thousand fold.
But Eve drew back; her face was cold.
(Oh, who can read the cipher of a soul.)

'Now art thou mourning still, sweet wife,'
Spake Adam tenderly, 'the life

Of our lost Eden? Why, in *thee*

All Paradise remains for me.'

(Deep, deep the currents in a strong man's
heart.)

Thus Eve: 'Nay, not lost Eden's bliss

I mourn; for heavier woe than this

Wears on me with one thought accursed.

In Adam's life I am not first.'

(O woman's mind! what hells are fashioned
there.)

'The serpent whispered Lilith's name:

('Twas thus he drove me to my shame)

Pluck yonder fruit, he said, and know,

How Adam loved *her*, long ago.'

(Fools, fools, who wander searching after pain.)

'I ate; and like an ancient scroll,

I saw that other life unroll;

I saw thee, Adam, far from here

With Lilith on a wondrous sphere.'

(Bold, bold, the daring of a jealous heart.)

'Nay, tell me not I dreamed it all;

Last night in sleep thou didst let fall

Her name in tenderness; I bowed
My stricken head and cried aloud.'
(Vast, vast the torment of a self-made woe.)

'And it was then, and not before,
That Eden shut and barred its door.
Alone in God's great world I seemed,
Whilst thou of thy lost Lilith dreamed.'
(Oh, who can measure such wide loneliness.)

'Now every little breeze that sings,
Sighs Lilith, like thy whisperings.
Oh, where can sorrow hide its face,
When Lilith, Lilith, fills all space?'
(And Adam in the darkness spake no word.)

GOD'S MEASURE



OD measures souls by their capacity
For entertaining his best Angel,
Love.

Who loveth most is nearest kin to
God,

Who is all Love, or Nothing.

He who sits
And looks out on the palpitating world,
And feels his heart swell in him large enough
To hold all men within it, he is near
His great Creator's standard, though he dwells
Outside the pale of churches, and knows not
A feast-day from a fast-day, or a line
Of Scripture even. What God wants of us
Is that outreaching bigness that ignores
All littleness of aims, or loves, or creeds,
And clasps all Earth and Heaven in its embrace.

A BALLADE OF THE UNBORN
DEAD



THEY walked the valley of the dead;
Lit by a weird half light;
No sound they made, no word they
said;

And they were pale with fright.
Then suddenly from unseen places came
Loud laughter, that was like a whip of flame.

They looked, and saw, beyond, above,
A land where wronged souls wait;
(Those spirits called to earth by love,
And driven back by hate).

And each one stood in anguish dumb and wild,
As she beheld the phantom of her child.

Yea, saw the soul her wish had hurled
Out into night and death;
Before it reached the Mother world,
Or drew its natal breath.

And terrified, each hid her face and fled
Beyond the presence of her unborn dead.

And God's Great Angel, who provides
Souls for our mortal land,
Laughed, with the laughter that derides,
At that fast fleeting band
Of self-made barren women of the earth.
(Hell has no curse that withers like such mirth.)

'O Angel, tell us who were they,
That down below us fared;
Those shapes with faces strained and grey,
And eyes that stared and stared;
Something there was about them, gave us fear;
Yet are we lonely, now they are not here.'

Thus spake the spectral children; thus
The Angel made reply:

'They have no part or share with us;
They were but passers-by.'

'But may we pray for them?' the phantoms
plead.

'Yea, for they need your prayers,' the Angel
said.

They went upon their lonely way;
 (Far, far from Paradise);
Their path was lit with one wan ray
 From ghostly children's eyes;
The little children who were never born;
And as they passed, the Angel laughed in scorn.

TO MEN



SIRS, when you pity us, I say
You waste your pity. Let it stay,
Well corked and stored upon your
shelves,
Until you need it for yourselves.

We do appreciate God's thought
In forming you, before He brought
Us into life. His art was crude,
But oh, so virile in its rude

Large elemental strength: and then
He learned His trade in making men;
Learned how to mix and mould the clay
And fashion in a finer way.

How fine that skilful way can be
You need but lift your eyes to see;
And we are glad God placed you there
To lift your eyes and find us fair.

Apprentice labour though you were,
He made you great enough to stir
The best and deepest depths of us,
And we are glad He made you thus.

Ay! we are glad of many things.
God strung our hearts with such fine strings
The least breath moves them, and we hear
Music where silence greets your ear.

We suffer so? but women's souls,
Like violet powder dropped on coals,
Give forth their best in anguish. Oh,
The subtle secrets that we know,

Of joy in sorrow, strange delights
Of ecstasy in pain-filled nights,
And mysteries of gain in loss
Known but to Christ upon the Cross!

Our tears are pitiful to you?
Look how the heaven-reflecting dew
Dissolves its life in tears. The sand
Meanwhile lies hard upon the strand.

How could your pity find a place
For us, the mothers of the race?

Men may be fathers unaware,
So poor the title is you wear,

But mothers——? who that crown adorns
Knows all its mingled blooms and thorns;
And she whose feet that path hath trod
Has walked upon the heights with God.

✓ No, offer us not pity's cup.
There is no looking down or up
Between us: eye looks straight in eye:
Born equals, so we live and die.

REINCARNATION



HE slept as weary toilers do,

She gazed up at the moon.

He stirred and said, 'Wife, come
to bed';

She answered, 'Soon, full soon.'

(Oh! that strange mystery of the
dead moon's face.)

Her cheek was wan, her wistful mouth

Was lifted like a cup:

The moonful night dripped liquid light:

She seemed to quaff it up.

(Oh! that unburied corpse that lies in space.)

Her life had held but drudgery—

She spelled her Bible thro;

Of books and lore she knew no more

Than little children do.

(Oh! the weird wonder of that pallid sphere.)

Her youth had been a loveless waste,

Starred by no holiday.

And she had wed for roof, and bread;

She gave her work in pay.

(Oh! the moon-memories, vague and strange and
dear.)

She drank the night's insidious wine,

And saw another scene:

A stately room—rare flowers in bloom,

Herself in silken sheen.

(Oh! vast the chambers of the moon, and wide.)

A step drew near, a curtain stirred;

She shook with sweet alarms.

Oh! splendid face; oh! manly grace;

Oh! strong impassioned arms.

(Oh! silent moon, what secrets do you hide!)

The warm red lips of thirsting love

On cheek and brow were pressed;

As the bees know where honeys grow,

They sought her mouth, her breast.

(Oh! the dead moon holds many a dead delight.)

The sleeper stirred and gruffly spake,

'Come, wife, where have you been?'

She whispered low, 'Dear God, I go—

But 'tis the seventh sin.'

(Oh, the sad secrets of that orb of white.)

RECRIMINATION

I



AID Life to Death, 'Methinks if I
were you

I would not carry such an awesome
face

To terrify the helpless human race.

And if, indeed, those wondrous tales be true
Of happiness beyond, and if I knew
About the boasted blessings of that place,
I would not hide so miserly all trace
Of my vast knowledge, Death, if I were you.
But like a glorious angel I would lean
Above the pathway of each sorrowing soul,
Hope in my eyes, and comfort in my breath,
And strong conviction in my radiant mien,
The while I whispered of that beauteous goal.
This would I do, if I were you, O Death!

II

Said Death to Life, 'If I were you, my friend,
I would not lure confiding souls each day

With fair false smiles, to enter on a way
So filled with pain and trouble to the end.
I would not tempt those whom I should defend,
Nor stand unmoved and see them go astray.
Nor would I force unwilling souls to stay
Who longed for freedom, were I you, my friend.
But like a tender mother I would take
The weary world upon my sheltering breast
And wipe away its tears, and soothe its strife.
I would fulfill my promises, and make
My children bless me as they sank to rest
Where now they curse—if I were you, O Life!’

III

Life made no answer; and Death spoke again:
‘I would not woo from God’s sweet nothingness
A soul to being, if I could not bless
And crown it with all joy. If unto men
My face seems awesome, tell me, Life, why then
Do they pursue me, mad for my caress,
Believing in my silence lies redress
For your loud falsehoods?’ (So Death spoke
again.)
‘Oh, it is well for you I am not fair,
Well that I hide behind a voiceless tomb

The mighty secrets of that other place.
Else would you stand in impotent despair
While unfledged souls straight from the mother's
 womb
Rushed to my arms, and spat upon your face.'

THE GULF STREAM



KILLED mariner, and counted sane
and wise,
That was a curious thing which
chanced to me,
So good a sailor on so fair a sea.
With favouring winds and blue unshadowed
skies,
Led by the faithful beacon of Love's eyes,
Past reef and shoal, my life-boat bounded free
And fearless of all changes that might be
Under calm waves, where many a sunk rock lies.

A golden dawn; yet suddenly my barque
Strained at the sails, as in a cyclone's blast,
And battled with an unseen current's force:
For we had entered when the night was dark
That old tempestuous Gulf Stream of the
Past.
But for love's eyes, I had not kept the
course.

A MINOR CHORD



HEARD a strain of music in the
street—

A wandering waif of sound. And
then straightway

A nameless desolation filled the day.

The great green earth that had been fair and
sweet,

Seemed but a tomb; the life I thought replete

With joy, grew lonely for a vanished May.

Forgotten sorrows resurrected lay

Like bleaching skeletons about my feet.

Above me stretched the silent, suffering sky,

Dumb with vast anguish for departed suns

That brutal Time to nothingness has hurled.

The daylight was as sad as smiles that lie

Upon the wistful, unkissed mouths of nuns,

And I stood prisoned in an awful world.

THE SQUANDERER



OD gave him passions, splendid as the
sun,
Meant for the lordliest purposes; a
part
Of nature's full and fertile mother
heart,
From which new systems and new stars are
spun.
And now, behold, behold, what he has done!
In Folly's court and carnal Pleasures' mart
He flung the wealth life gave him at the start.
(This, of all mortal sins, the deadliest one.)

At dawn he stood, potential, opulent,
With virile manhood, and emotions keen,
And wonderful with God's creative fire.
At noon he stands, with Love's large fortune
spent
In petty traffic, unproductive, mean—
A pauper, cursed with impotent desire.

PREPARATION



WE must not force events, but rather
make

The heart soil ready for their coming, as

The earth spreads carpets for the
feet of Spring,

Or, with the strengthening tonic of the frost,

Prepares for winter. Should a July noon

Burst suddenly upon a frozen world

Small joy would follow, even though that world

Were longing for the Summer. Should the sting

Of sharp December pierce the heart of June,

What death and devastation would ensue!

All things are planned. The most majestic
sphere

That whirls through space is governed and
controlled

By supreme law, as is the blade of grass

Which through the bursting bosom of the earth

Creeps up to kiss the light. Poor, puny man

Alone doth strive and battle with the Force

Which rules all lives and worlds, and he alone
Demands effect before producing cause.

How vain the hope! We cannot harvest joy
Until we sow the seed, and God alone
Knows when that seed has ripened. Oft we stand
And watch the ground with anxious, brooding
eyes,

Complaining of the slow, unfruitful yield,
Not knowing that the shadow of ourselves
Keeps off the sunlight and delays result.

Sometimes our fierce impatience of desire
Doth like a sultry May force tender shoots
Of half-formed pleasures and unshaped events
To ripen prematurely, and we reap

But disappointment; or we rot the germs
With briny tears ere they have time to grow.
While stars are born and mighty planets die
And hissing comets scorch the brow of space,
The Universe keeps its eternal calm.

Through patient preparation, year on year,
The earth endures the travail of the Spring
And Winter's desolation. So our souls
In grand submission to a higher law
Should move serene through all the ills of life
Believing them masked joys.

SIRIUS

'Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way, sixty thousand years have gone.'—GARRETT P. SERVISS.



SINCE Sirius crossed the Milky Way
Full sixty thousand years have gone;
Yet hour by hour, and day by day,
This tireless star speeds on and on.

Methinks he must be moved to mirth
By that droll tale of Genesis,
Which says creation had its birth
For such a puny world as this.

To hear how One who fashioned all
Those Solar Systems, tier on tiers,
Expressed in little Adam's fall
The purpose of a million spheres.

And, witness of the endless plan,
To splendid wrath he must be wrought

By pigmy creeds presumptuous man
Sends forth as God's primeval thought.

Perchance from half a hundred stars
He hears as many curious things;
From Venus, Jupiter, and Mars,
And Saturn with the beauteous rings,

There may be students of the Cause
Who send their revelations out,
And formulate their codes of laws,
With heavens for faith and hells for doubt.

On planets old ere form or place
Was lent to earth, may dwell—who knows—
A God-like and perfected race
That hails great Sirius as he goes.

In zones that circle moon and sun,
'Twixt world and world, he may see souls
Whose span of earthly life is done,
Still journeying up to higher goals.

And on dead planets grey and cold
Grim spectral souls, that harboured hate
Life after life, he may behold
Descending to a darker fate.

And on his grand majestic course
He may have caught one glorious sight
Of that vast shining central Source
From which proceeds all Life, all Light.

Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way
Full sixty thousand years have gone;
No mortal man may bid him stay,
No mortal man may speed him on.

No mortal mind may comprehend
What is beyond, what was before;
To God be glory without end,
Let man be humble and adore.

REMEMBERED



THIS art was loving; Eros set his sign
Upon that youthful forehead, and he
drew
The hearts of women, as the sun
draws dew.
Love feeds love's thirst as wine feeds love of
wine;
Nor is there any potion from the vine
Which makes men drunken like the subtle
brew
Of kisses crushed by kisses; and he grew
Inebriated with that draught divine.
Yet in his sober moments, when the sun
Of radiant summer paled to lonely fall,
And passion's sea had grown an ebbing
tide;
From out the many, Memory singled one
Full cup that seemed the sweetest of them
all—
*The warm red mouth that mocked him and
denied.*

THE CALL



*N the banquet hall of Progress
God has bidden to a feast
All the women in the East.*

Some have said, 'We are not ready,—
We must wait another day.'
Some, with voices clear and steady,
'Lord, we hear, and we obey.'

Others, timid and uncertain,
Step forth trembling in the light.
Many hide behind the curtain
With their faces hid from sight.

*In the banquet hall of Progress
All must gather soon or late,
And the patient Host will wait.*

If to-day or if to-morrow,
If in gladness, or in woe,

If with pleasure, or with sorrow,
All must answer, all must go.

They must go with unveiled faces,
Clothed in virtue and in pride.
For the Host has set their places,
And He will not be denied.

THE AWAKENING



LOVE the tropics, where sun and rain
Go forth together, a joyous train,
To hold up the green, gay side of the
world,
And to keep earth's banners of bloom
unfurled.

I love the scents that are hidden there
By housekeeper Time, in her chests of air:
Strange and subtle and all arife
With vague lost dreams of a bygone life.

They steal upon you by night and day,
But never a whiff can you take away:
And never a song of a tropic bird
Outside of its palm-decked land is heard.

And nowhere else can you know the sweet
Soft 'joy-in-nothing' that comes with the heat
Of tropic regions. And yet, and yet,
If in evergreen worlds my way were set

I would span the waters of widest seas
To see the wonder of waking trees;
To feel the shock of sudden delight
That comes when the orchard has changed in a
 night,

From the winter nun to the bride of May,
And the harp of Spring is attuned to play
The wedding march, and the sun is priest,
And the world is bidden to join the feast.

Oh, never is felt in a tropic clime,
Where the singing of birds is a ceaseless chime,
That leap o' the blood, and the rapture thrill,
That comes to us here, with the first bird's trill;
*And only the eye that has looked on snows
Can see all the beauty that lies in a rose.*
The lure of the tropics I understand,
But ho! for the Spring in my native land.

WHAT LOVE IS

AHASUERAS



ELL me thy name!

ESTHER

My name, great sire, is Esther.

AHASUERAS

So thou art Esther? Esther! 'tis a name
Breathed into sound as softly as a sigh.
A woman's name should melt upon the lips
Like Love's first kisses, and thy countenance
Is fit companion for so sweet a name!

ESTHER

Thou art most kind. I would my name and face
Were mine own making and not accident.
Then I might feel elated at thy praise,
Where now I feel confusion.

AHASUERAS

Thou hast wit
As well as beauty, Esther. Both are gems

That do embellish woman in man's sight.
Yet there are gems of second magnitude!
Dost *thou* possess the one great perfect gem—
The matchless jewel of the world called *love*?

ESTHER

Sire, in the heart of every woman dwells
That wondrous perfect gem!

AHASUERAS

Then, Esther, speak!
And tell me what is *love*! I fain would know
Thy definition of that much-mouthed word,
By woman most employed—least understood.

ESTHER

What can a humble Jewish maiden know
That would instruct a warrior and a king?
I have but dreamed of love as maidens will,
While thou hast known its fulness. All the world
Loves Great Ahasueras!

AHASUERAS

All the world
Fears great Ahasueras! Kings, my child,
Are rarely loved as anything but kings.

Love, as I see it in the court and camp,
Means seeking royal favour. I would know
How love is fashioned in a maiden's dreams.

ESTHER

Sire, love seeks nothing that kings can bestow.
Love is the king of all things here below;
Love makes the monarch but a bashful boy,
Love makes the peasant monarch in his joy;
Love seeks not place, all places are the same,
When lighted by the radiance of love's flame.
Who deems proud love could fawn to power and
splendour
Hath known not love, but some base-born
pretender.

AHASUERAS

If this be love, I would know more of it.
Speak on, fair Esther! What is love beside?

ESTHER

Love is in all things, all things are in love.
Love is the earth, the sea, the skies above;
Love is the bird, the blossom, and the wind;
Love hath a million eyes, yet love is blind;

Love is a tempest, awful in its might;
Love is the silence of a moon-lit night;
Love is the aim of every human soul;
And he who hath not loved hath missed life's
goal!

AHASUERAS

But tell me of thyself, of thine own dreams!
How wouldst thou love, and how be loved again?

ESTHER

Who most doth love thinks least of love's return;
She is content to feel the passion burn
In her own bosom, and its sacred fire
Consumes each selfish purpose and desire.
'Tis in the giving, love's best rapture lies,
Not in the counting of the things it buys.

AHASUERAS

Yet, is there not vast anguish and despair
In love that finds no answering word or smile?

ESTHER

So radiant is love, it lends a glow
To each dark sorrow and to every woe.
To love completely is to part with pain,

Nor is there mortal who can love in vain.
Love is its own reward, it pays full measure,
And in love's sharpest grief lies subtlest pleasure.

AHASUERAS

Methinks, a mighty warrior, lord or king
Must in thy fancy play the lover's part;
None else could wake such reverential thought.

ESTHER

When woman loves one born of lowly state,
Her thought gives crown and sceptre to her
mate;
Yet be he king, or chief of some great clan,
She loves him but as woman loves a man.
Monarch or peasant, 'tis the same, I wis,
When once she gives him love's surrendering
kiss.

LOVE'S SUPREMACY



S yon great Sun in his supreme condition
Absorbs small worlds and makes
them all his own,
So does my love absorb each vain
ambition,
Each outside purpose which my life has
known.
Stars cannot shine so near that vast orb'd
splendour;
They are content to feed his flames of fire:
And so my heart is satisfied to render
Its strength, its all, to meet thy strong desire.
As in a forest when dead leaves are falling
Save all from some perennial green tree,
So one by one I find all pleasures palling
That are not linked with or enjoyed by thee.
And all the homage that the world may proffer,
I take as perfumed oils or incense sweet,

And think of it as one thing more to offer,
And sacrifice to Love, at thy dear feet.

I love myself because thou art my lover,
My name seems dear since uttered by thy
voice;

Yet, argus-eyed, I watch and would discover
Each blemish in the object of thy choice.

I coldly sit in judgment on each error,
To my soul's gaze I hold each fault of me,
Until my pride is lost in abject terror,
Lest I become inadequate to thee.

Like some swift-rushing and sea-seeking river,
Which gathers force the farther on it goes,
So does the current of my love forever
Find added strength and beauty as it flows.
The more I give, the more remains for giving,
The more receive, the more remains to win.
Ah! only in eternities of living
Will life be long enough to love thee in.

PROTEST



O sin by silence, when we should protest,
Makes cowards out of men. The
human race
Has climbed on protest. Had no
voice been raised
Against injustice, ignorance, and lust,
The inquisition yet would serve the law,
And guillotines decide our least disputes.
The few who dare, must speak and speak again
To right the wrongs of many. Speech, thank
God,
No vested power in this great day and land
Can gag or throttle. Press and voice may cry
Loud disapproval of existing ills;
May criticise oppression and condemn
The lawlessness of wealth-protecting laws
That let the children and childbearers toil
To purchase ease for idle millionaires.

Therefore I do protest against the boast
Of independence in this mighty land.

Call no chain strong, which holds one rusted
link.

Call no land free, that holds one fettered slave.
Until the manacled slim wrists of babes
Are loosed to toss in childish sport and glee,
Until the mother bears no burden, save
The precious one beneath her heart, until
God's soil is rescued from the clutch of greed
And given back to labor, let no man
Call this the land of freedom.

THE TECHNIQUE OF IMMORTALITY



HERE hangs a picture on my wall;
Three leafless trees; dead woods
beyond;
Brown grasses and a marshy pond;
And over all
An amber sunset of late fall.

Too frail the artist heart to cope
With all the stern demands of fame.
He passed before he won a name,
Or gained his hope,
To realms where dreams have larger scope.

Yet in the modest little square
Of canvas, that I daily see
He left a legacy to me
Of something rare;
For more than what is painted there.

For tree and grass and sunset sky
Hold subtler qualities than art;
It is the painter's pulsing heart

That seems to cry,
“I loved these things—they cannot die.”

And so they live to stir and move
Each gazer's soul; because they speak
Of something mightier than technique.
They live to prove
The immortality of love.

They speak this message day by day;
“Love, love your work, or small or great;
Love, love, and leave the rest to fate.
For love will stay
When all things else have passed away.”

I WONDER



READ the morning news,
Here in this cosy spot,
And life seems a thing most sweet.

I wonder would I meet
The coming day with as glad a
thought

Had I toiled all night till the break of the
dawn

That the world might know what is going on.

I read, and rest, and dream;

Beside the glowing grate.

And life seems warm and good.

I wonder if it would,

Had it happened that mine were the fate

To dig like a worm in the deep dark mold
That the world above me might keep off cold.

Out on the deck I sit,

While the ship speeds on apace.

Oh, life is a joy at sea.

I wonder would it be
Had it happened that mine were the place
Down in the hot close hold of the boat
To stoke the engine and keep it afloat.

On the flying train I speed

Off for a holiday;
And life is a lazy dream.

I wonder how it would seem
If I sat while the dark night paled the gray
Watching the signals with eyes astrain
And my whole thought bent on guiding the
train.

Guardian angels who fill sky spaces,

Unseen Helpers and Spirit Friends,
Bless all the toilers in humble places
On whom the comfort of earth depends.
And waken the heart of the world till it heed
Their cry of need.

OMNIPOTENCE



USING at times on this vast Universe,
My pigmy self, abashed and mortified,
In patient silence, would henceforth abide,
Nor strive with its poor protest, to disperse
The seeming shadows from our one small world.
That Power which fashioned mountains, shaped the sea,
And into space a million planets hurled,
Could have no need of any aid from me.

The tiniest seed, what mind can understand
With all its hidden mysteries of bloom—
The whole grand system, by a Master planned,
For human interference leaves no room.
All things move onward to their certain goal;
What God conceived, God only can control.

Sudden the old cry breaks upon my ear,
The protest and appeal of the oppressed!
Something immortal awakens in my breast,
And answers to that call, "I hear, I hear!"
The burdens of the suffering world seem
mine
And mine progression's healthful discontent.
My greater self proclaims itself divine—
Knows whence it came, and wherefore it was
sent.

When the first ray pierced through chaotic
night
My spirit was conceived by primal force,
And started on its way to gather light
And scatter it along earth's troubled course.
Kin to the sun and sea and wind and sky,
A part of the Omnipotence am I.

I am important to the perfect plan,
And I assist the purpose. As the sun
Completes the projects by the cause begun,
So His intentions are worked out by man.
In the construction of a great machine
The smallest parts are needed by the whole;

The mighty wheel is held by bolts unseen.

So in God's earth there is no useless soul.

We are the means to some majestic end,

Through us must come the universal good.

In us the forces of the Maker blend,

On us depends the larger brotherhood;

With us mankind must journey to the heights—

Let us go forth, and set God's world to rights!

INTERLUDE



HE days grow shorter, the nights grow
longer,

The headstones thicken along the
way;

And life grows sadder but love grows
stronger

For those who walk with us, day by day.

The tear comes quicker, the laugh comes slower,
The courage is lesser to do and dare;
And the tide of joy in the heart runs lower
And seldom covers the reefs of care.

But all true things in the world seem truer,
And the better things of the earth seem best;
And friends are dearer as friends are fewer,
And love is all as our sun dips west.

Then let us clasp hands as we walk together,
And let us speak softly, in love's sweet tone;
For no man knows, on the morrow, whether
We two pass by, or but one alone.

CONSUMMATION



UST when all hope had perished in
my soul

And balked desire made havoc
with my mind,

My cruel lady suddenly grew
kind

And sent these written words upon a scroll:

“When knowing Night her dusky scarf has tied
Across the bold intrusive eyes of Day
Come as a glad triumphant lover may
No longer fearing that he be denied.”

I read her letter for the hundredth time;

And for the hundredth time my gladdened
sight

Blurred with the rapture of my vast delight
And swooned upon the page. I caught the
chime

Of far off bells, and at each silvery note

My heart on tip-toe, pressed its eager ear

Against my breast; it was such joy to hear
The tolling of the hour of which she wrote.

The curious Day still lingered in the skies
And watched me, as I hastened to the tryst.

But back beyond great clouds of amethyst
I saw the Night's soft, reassuring eyes.

"Oh, Night!" I cried, "dear Love's considerate
friend

Haste from the far dim valleys of the west
And rock this fretful world to peaceful rest
And bid the Day's insistent vigil end."

Down brooding streets and past the harbored
ships

The Night's young handmaid, Twilight,
walked with me.

A spent moon leaned inertly o'er the sea;
A few pale phantom stars were in eclipse.

There was the house, my Lady's sea-girt bower
All draped in gloom, save for one taper's
glow

Which lit the path where willing feet would
go:

There was the house, and this the promised hour.

The tide was out, and from the sea's salt path
Rose amorous odors, filtering through the
Night

And stirring all the senses to delight.

(Sweet perfumes left, since Aphrodite's bath.)
Back in the wooded copse, a whippoorwill
 Gave love's impassioned and impatient call.
 On languorous sands I head the waves' kiss
 fall

And fall again, so hushed the hour and still.

Light was my knock upon the door, oh light,
 And yet the sound seemed rude. My pulses
 beat

 So loud they drowned the coming of her
 feet.

The arrow of her taper pierced the gloom.
The portal closed behind me. She was there
 Love on her lips and yielding in her eyes
 And but the sea to hear our vows and sighs
She took my hand and led me up the stair.

TIME'S GAZE



IME looked me in the eyes while
passing by

The milestones of the year. That
piercing gaze

Was both an accusation and reproach.

No speech was needed. In a sorrow-
ing look

More meaning lies than in complaining words,
And silence hurts as keenly as reproof.

Oh, opulent, kind giver of rich hours,
How have I used thy benefits! As babes
Unstring a necklace, laughing at the sound
Of priceless jewels dropping one by one,
So I have laughed while precious moment's
rolled

Into the hidden corners of the past.
And I have let large opportunities
For high endeavour move unheeded by,
While little joys and cares absorbed my
strength.

And yet, dear Time, set to my credit this:
*Not one white hour have I made black with hate,
Nor wished one living creature aught but good.*

Be patient with me. Though the sun slants
west,
The day has not yet finished, and I feel
Necessity for action and resolve
Bear in upon my consciousness. I know
The earth's eternal need of earnest souls,
And the great hunger of the world for Love.
I know the goal to high achievement lies
Through the dull pathway of self-conquest first;
And on the stairs of little duties done
We climb to joys that stand thy test. O Time,
Be patient with me, and another day,
Perchance, in passing by, thine eyes may smile.

UNSATISFIED



*HE bird flies home to its young;
The flower folds its leaves about an
opening bud;
And in my neighbor's house there
is the cry of a child;
I close my window that I need not
hear.*

She is mine and she is very beautiful;
And in her heart there is no evil thought.
There is even love in her heart,
Love of life, love of joy, love of this fair world
And love of me (or love of my love for her);
Yet she will never consent to bear me a child.
And when I speak of it she weeps;
Always she weeps, saying
“Do I not bring joy enough into your life?
Are you not satisfied with me and my love
As I am satisfied with you?
Never would I urge you to some great peril

To please my whim ; yet ever so you urge me ;
Urge me to risk my happiness, yea life itself,
So lightly do you hold me." And then she weeps
Always she weeps until I kiss away her tears,
And soothe her with sweet lies, saying I am
content.

Then she goes singing through the house like
some bright bird ;

Preening her wings ; making herself all beau-
tiful ;

Perching upon my knee, and pecking at my lips
With little kisses. So again love's ship
Goes sailing forth upon a portless sea
From nowhere into nowhere ; and it takes
Or brings no cargoes to enrich the world. The
years

Are passing by us. We will yet be old
Who now are young. And all the man in me
Cries for the reproduction of myself
Through her I love. Why love and youth like
ours,

Could populate with gods and goddesses
This great green earth, and give the race new
types

Were it made fruitful. Often I can see

As in a vision, desolate old age
And loneliness descending on us two
And nowhere in the world, nowhere beyond the
earth

Fruit of my loins and of her womb to feed
Our hungry hearts. To me it seems
More sorrowful than sitting by small graves
And wetting sad eyed pansies with our tears.

*The bird flies home to its young;
The flower folds its leaves about an opening bud,
And in my neighbor's house there is the cry of
a child,
I close my window that I need not hear.*

THE ETERNAL NOW.



TIME with his back against the mighty
wall
Which hides from view the
future's joy and sorrow,
Hears without answer the impatient
call,
Of puny man, to tell him of tomorrow.

Mortal be wise, and to the silence bow;
These useless and unquiet ways forsaking,
Concern thyself with the Eternal Now;
Today holds all things ready for thy taking.

THE MILL

Great and devastating as are the evils connected with child and woman labor in mills and factories, there must be many a man and woman who finds happiness in the work which these manufactories afford.

It is to voice the feeling which such toilers experience, that this little song is written. And it is sent out with confidence that it will be understood and echoed by the optimistic laborer who finds in his work a means of independence, and an opportunity for the development of his energies.



SOMETHING there is in the mill

whistle blowing

Sets my blood flowing—

Stirs me with life.

Gives me the feeling of being a part
of it,

Hand of it, heart of it,

Ready to plunge in the thick of the strife

As a strong swimmer goes when the seas are
rife.

Many have said there was pain in the call of it;
I get the thrall of it;

Nerved and made strong,

My hand reaches out for the work that is waiting it;

Loving, not hating it;

Loving the noise, and the rush, and the throng,

Loving the days as they hurry along.

Over the moil and the murk and the grime in it,
Something sublime in it,

Calls to my soul.

Some things that speak of the ceaseless endeavor

For aye and forever,

Moving the Universe on to its goal,

And each of us parcel and part of the whole.

Oh, there is sorrow, injustice and wrong in it;
But there's a song in it.

All day I hear

Over the din and the discord, the thrill of it,
That's the brave mill of it,

Doing its work without worry or fear

And breathing its message of strength in my ear.

Happy, I sing to it;

Smiling, I bring to it,

Patience and love, for the tasks that lie near.

A WISH



REAT dignity ever attends great
grief;

And silently walks beside it.

And I always know when I meet
such woe,

That Invisible Helpers guide it.

And I know deep sorrow is like a tide,

It can not always be flowing

The high water mark in the night and the dark—
Then dawn, and the outward going.

But the people who pull at my heartstrings
hard,

Are the ones whom destiny hurries

Through commonplace ways, to the end of their
days

And pesters with paltry worries.

The peddlers who trudge with a budget of
wares

To the door that is slammed unkindly;

The vender who stands with his shop in his
hands

Where the hastening hosts pass blindly.

The woman who holds in her poor flat purse,
The price of her room rent only;
While her starved eye feeds on the comforts
she needs

To brighten a lot that is lonely;
The man in the desert of endless work,
Unsoftened by islands of leisure;
And the children who toil in dust and soil,
While their little hearts cry for pleasure.

The people who labor and scrimp and save,
At the call of some thankless duty,
And carefully hide with a mantle of pride
Their ravening hunger for beauty.

These ask no pity and seek no aid,
But the thought of them somehow is haunt-
ing;
And I wish I might fling at them every thing
That I know in their hearts they are want-
ing.

**RETURN
TO →**

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LOAN PERIOD 1

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4

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